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Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7768th meeting

Tuesday, 13 September 2016, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. McCully	(New Zealand)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gimolieca
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2016/53)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2016/53)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Colombia to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/774, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by all Council members. I would like to thank all Council members for sponsoring the draft resolution, which is now a presidential text.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/729, which contains the report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the United Nations mission in Colombia.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2307 (2016).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): On behalf of the United Kingdom, I warmly welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2307 (2016) today, and I congratulate the Government of Colombia on the historic peace agreement reached with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) last month.

"Historic" is a word that is sometimes overused in this Chamber, and yet today it could not be more fitting. Through this resolution, we have marked history — an agreement that brings to an end over half a century of fighting and that has taken almost four years to negotiate. It is a process that is already bringing the dividends of peace. Just this weekend, we saw more children released into a new life — one without guns and without fear. Both parties have shown great bravery and leadership in giving those children and every other Colombian genuine hope for the future.

It takes courage to lay aside weapons and accept the protection of a former enemy. It took a bold step — perhaps an unprecedented step — for a Government to put its country on the Council's agenda. In turn, the Council has shown great sensitivity and flexibility in responding quickly to Colombia's request. As the penholder on this issue, I am proud of the role that the United Kingdom has played, both here and in Colombia, in support of the peace agreement, and I pay tribute in particular to Cuba and Norway, as well as Chile and Venezuela, for their sustained support throughout the process.

But resolution 2307 (2016) is not just about tributes; it is also about providing our own support to make sure that this historic agreement turns into a historic peace. Through the resolution, we have finalized the mandate of the United Nations mission. We have authorized 450 United Nations observers to be there on the ground, verifying the return of peace after over 50 years of conflict. We have authorized the United Nations mission to contribute, together with the Government of Colombia, towards the camps for the FARC. And we have committed to doing all that in a way that maximizes the number of women in the mission.

Resolution 2307 (2016) is just one more milestone in Colombia's long journey towards peace. Outside this Chamber, generations of ordinary Colombians have lived their lives knowing nothing but war, and they now stand on the brink of peace. Next month, the people of Colombia will have a momentous opportunity to choose between a lasting peace or a return to years of conflict and suffering. The choice is in their hands.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation thanks the delegation of the United Kingdom for its work in leading the negotiations on the drafting of

resolution 2307 (2016), which we adopted today in the belief that it will help to consolidate and strengthen peace at this hopeful stage for Colombia. Uruguay commends the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejército del Pueblo for the historic agreement reached on 24 August on ending the conflict and building stable and lasting peace in Colombia, which made it possible for us to adopt today's resolution. My country acknowledges and highlights the commitment and courage of the parties during the four years of negotiations. The implementation of the agreement will put an end to the last and oldest conflict on the hemisphere, while consolidating Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace. My country also acknowledges the ongoing efforts of Cuba and Norway as guarantor countries, as well as the work of Chile and Venezuela as supporting countries during the peace negotiations. We are also grateful for the complete and detailed report (S/2016/729) of the Secretary-General, which informed the drafting of today's resolution and which details the complex work still ahead, which we trust will be concluded successfully.

At this new stage in the process, Uruguay reaffirms its support for peace in Colombia and reiterates its readiness and willingness to continue to work with the parties in any way they deem we can be useful. Uruguay is very pleased to point out that this was a process initiated and led by Colombians, with Colombians as the main focus of its future success. We believe that hallmark of the process is an example for the international community. We will continue attentively to follow each step forward in this new phase of the process in the same spirit of supporting the Government and the people of Colombia at such a crucial stage of their national history and that of the entire American continent.

Ms. Sison (United States of America): After nearly four years of negotiations and over half a century of conflict, the Colombian Government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) have reached a final peace accord that covers myriad complex issues. Today the United States welcomes the support of the Security Council to help Colombia implement its final peace accord with the FARC, and congratulates the parties for their sustained commitment to ending the longest-running conflict in the Americas, which tragically resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths and tens of thousands of kidnappings and displaced millions of Colombians. We also thank Cuba and Norway for the special roles they played as co-guarantors, as well as Venezuela and Chile, which supported the process.

As President Obama said,

> "Even as we mark the end of an era of war, we recognize that the work of achieving a just and lasting peace is only beginning. Yet just as the United States has been Colombia's partner in a time of war, we will be Colombia's partner in waging peace."

Through resolution 2307 (2016), the Security Council makes clear that the United Nations also stands with the Colombian people as they work towards implementing the final peace accord. The agreement's successful implementation is integral to the hard work of securing a truly just and lasting peace, which all those gathered here today know is something that the Colombian people unquestionably deserve.

Today's resolution will ensure the readiness of the United Nations monitoring and verification mission in Colombia by updating the mandate with details that were unavailable last January when resolution 2261 (2016) was adopted. The United States commends those countries that will be playing a role in the United Nations monitoring and verification mechanism to monitor and verify the bilateral ceasefire, the cessation of hostilities and the disarmament process.

The stakes for the success of the mission are high. The recent killing of five human rights activists in Colombia, including the assassination of Nestor Iván Martínez over the weekend, makes clear that the peace is still fragile. The United Nations monitoring and verification responsibilities will be critical to building confidence between the parties and preventing a return to armed conflict. With today's adoption, we are confident it will be up to the task.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela co-sponsored and voted in favor of resolution 2307 (2016), on the establishment and operation of the United Nations political mission in the Republic of Colombia, which complements resolution 2261 (2016). We did so out of our conviction that the former constitutes a fundamental element in the verification and monitoring of the international community over the historic peace process taking place in fraternal Colombia. I kindly as

that Ambassador María Emma Mejía Vélez convey our congratulations to her Government.

Today's unanimous adoption of the resolution took place in an atmosphere of joy and hope following the definitive, full and Final Agreement reached between the Government of Colombia and Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejército del Pueblo to end once and for all the bloody conflict that brought mourning to the Colombian people for over 50 years. The commitment of the parties to ending the war and building a stable and lasting peace has led to widespread support and a feeling of joy in our region and among the international community. We commend both parties on that historic agreement.

For our country, it is extremely important that Colombia successfully build a society of peace, for, as the brothers we are, we have felt for and supported the Colombian people throughout the terrible years of violence. Our countries were created and forged together under the leadership of the sword of the Liberator Simón Bolívar. We were one country, and the liberation armies crossed borders only to bring freedom to the rest of South America.

On our own territory, we have given shelter to more than 4 million Colombians who, product of the war and its economic consequences, were forced to move. Similarly, along the entire length of our long border of over 2,000 kilometres, we have suffered the rigours of violence and the existence of illegal structures to finance and support the war in Colombia. Today our border area is plagued by the phenomenon of paramilitarism, which was created as an anti-insurgent strategy and must be completely dismantled.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela feels vindicated, along with Cuba, Chile and Norway, for having participated as supporters and guarantors of the complex and lengthy negotiation process that culminated in the signed peace accords. We also greatly appreciate the effort, participation and political support of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, which expressed its unanimous support for the terms of the agreements and their willingness to participate and support the work of the United Nations political mission.

I would also like to mention and recognize President Hugo Chávez Frías for his commitment and tireless work for peace in Colombia. As a close associate of his, I can attest to his efforts and constant concern for peace in Colombia, as well as to the political work led directly by him to approach and convince the parties as to the need for peace.

The work ahead for the political mission in supporting the parties in implementing the agreements and in monitoring and verifying compliance is a complex, and probably the most difficult task of all. Hence the need for the United Nations to dedicate itself as a whole — not only on aspects pertaining to financing the mission along with the Colombian Government, but above all in the extensive work relating to eradicating the root causes of conflict and creating spaces for former combatants and their bases of political support to participate in political and economic life.

We must work intensely and come to grips with the causes and characteristics of the conflict if we are to counter them and go from a logic and dynamic of intolerance and violence to one of inclusion, peace and social justice. We must recall that the war was triggered in part by the assassination of the popular leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán and the Bogotazo riots, after which broad sectors of the Colombian people were unable to participate in the political process and advocate for their economic and social aspirations, particularly those concerning land access and peasant claims.

We are concerned about the persistence of violent elements, which no doubt will be a problem the political mission will face on the ground. Some of these elements are national while others are local, such as paramilitarism and drug trafficking, which are an ongoing obstacle to peace. We also must be able to counter the actions of warlords, who have a great deal of economic and political clout in the country.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has supported, supports and will continue to support all efforts towards peace in Colombia. President Nicolás Maduro has expressed that sentiment, and we are doing so at the request of the Colombian Government. We hope and trust that the success of the United Nations political mission and the parties' adherence to the peace agreements will blaze a path for other insurgent groups to sign on to the peace process and the entire military and war structure can begin to adapt to the new reality.

In order to build momentum for peace, it is essential to reconsider Plan Colombia: Plan for Peace, Prosperity and the Strengthening of the State , which would result in a disproportionate foreign military presence on Colombian soil. Our country, deeply respectful of

the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Colombia, as well as the decisions of its Government and people, reiterates its offer to send at least 100 Venezuelan observers, with excellent training and gender balance, to be integrated into the United Nations political mission. We are deeply committed to the success of the mission and we have in-depth knowledge of the terrain and characteristics of the conflict.

Finally, we hope that the entire people of Colombia will support President Santos in this courageous historic bid for peace. It is our wish that by 2 October, peace and social justice will triumph over war.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister of Foreign Affairs for New Zealand.

At the outset, I welcome the Colombian Permanent Representative to the Council today. The historic peace agreement concluded between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) rebels on 24 August represents a significant milestone that offers the promise of a future of security and prosperity for all Colombians in the years to come. New Zealand congratulates President Santos on the courage and determination that he and his country have demonstrated in order to conclude this historic agreement.

We also commend FARC for its commitment to peace through the long period of negotiations. We congratulate and thank Cuba and Norway, as well as Chile and Venezuela, for their vital roles in steering the peace process to its successful conclusion. The United Nations will play a crucial role in supporting the effective implementation of Colombia's peace agreement.

By adopting resolution 2307 (2016) today, endorsing the Secretary-General's recommendations in his most recent report (S/2016/729) for a special political mission to assist with monitoring and verifying the agreed ceasefire and laying down of arms, the Security Council is ensuring it plays its part in helping to secure a better future for Colombia. It is only appropriate that the Council should play its part in these efforts. We hope that the activities of the special political mission can help give confidence to all sides that key elements of the agreement are being faithfully and effectively implemented by both sides.

The Security Council's response to Colombia's requests for assistance also represents an unusual and positive model for how the Council can and should interact with conflict-affected States. It is rare for a country to voluntarily approach the Security Council seeking its help. Colombia's actions in doing so, and the Council's swift responsiveness to its requests, with due respect to the specific needs of the situation, have provided an example of how constructive the relationship can be between the Council and the countries it seeks to assist. New Zealand was pleased to sponsor the resolution today, and welcomes its unanimous adoption. We recognize that challenges remain, and that there is a long road ahead to secure the peace that has been made, but with the continued commitment of all parties, we are confident these can be overcome.

The Colombian people will have an opportunity to express their views on the peace agreement through the referendum on 2 October. We hope they will choose the path of peace. New Zealand is also committed to supporting Colombia's efforts to find lasting stability and reconciliation, and to ensuring that Colombia experiences an early peace dividend. That is why we have pledged to assist Colombia in achieving its goal to become a landmine-free country by 2021. Colombia will not face the road ahead alone. New Zealand, the Council, and the international community stand ready to help.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Mr. President, I welcome you in presiding over today's meeting. China welcomes the Security Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2307 (2016), authorizing the United Nations mission in Colombia.

The Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia reached a final peace agreement in August, which will soon be formally signed and which represents major progress in Colombia's peace process. China wishes to extend its congratulations in that connection and to express its appreciation for the efforts of the Colombian Government and other countries, including Venezuela, Cuba, Chile and Norway, in that connection.

The signing of the final peace agreement will provide lasting peace and stability to the Colombian people and promote the peace and stability of the entire

region. It will also have a positive ripple effect on the search for solutions to other regional hotspot issues. The Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2307 (2016) is conducive to stepping up the deployment of the United Nations political mission in Colombia, facilitating the implementation of the monitoring and verification mechanism, and further promoting the peace process in Colombia.

China hopes that the United Nations will, on the basis of respect for Colombia's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, work to strengthen communication and coordination with the Colombian Government, facilitate the early deployment of the mission, help the parties in Colombia in fully implementing the ceasefire agreement and the final peace agreement, and provide constructive assistance to Colombia to ensure a smooth implementation of the peace process.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank and welcome you, Sir. Your presence here today demonstrates the importance of this meeting.

France warmly welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2307 (2016), which is a major step and pillar in the establishment of this historic peace in Colombia. It establishes the size, operational aspects and mandate of the United Nations mission created by the Council in order to monitor and verify respect for the ceasefire between the Colombian Government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), as well as the laying down of arms agreed to last year in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement concluded on 23 June in Havana. The Council's new resolution, for which we are grateful to the United Kingdom, will enable the mission to begin working to deploy on the ground as soon as possible with the goal of being fully operational as soon as the Agreement enters into force. It concludes an exemplary planning and preparation process in which the United Nations has taken all necessary steps to respond effectively to the joint call by the parties concerned for support in implementing the peace provisions. Once again, France heartily welcomes this outcome.

Adopted only days after the conclusion of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Long Lasting Peace between the Colombian Government and FARC, which has paved the way for ending a conflict that has lasted more than 50 years, today's resolution shows that our Organization as a whole, and the Security Council in particular, has lived up to expectations. It demonstrates once again the degree to which the United Nations is a central, legitimate and trusted actor in the maintenance of international peace and security all over the world.

France would like to once again congratulate President Santos Calderón, who had the courage and foresight to begin negotiations with FARC in 2012, and to acknowledge the role played in the Agreement by the guarantor States, Cuba and Norway, as well as the supporting States, Chile and Venezuela. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that as a nation, France stands in support of the Colombian people on their historic journey towards peace. Besides working on the issue in the Council, we will continue to support the peace process bilaterally, specifically by contributing to funding rural development and demining, and as part of the European Union, which also has an important part to play in implementing the Agreement.

The resolution we have just adopted is one of the final, essential bricks in the wall that is peace in Colombia. It is up to the Colombian people to complete it on the basis of the plebiscite to be held on 2 October. France will continue to work diligently to ensure that the peace process in Colombia succeeds, not only, of course, for Colombia and its people first and foremost, but also for the United Nations.

Mr. Seck (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): In January, at a ministerial-level Security Council meeting (S/PV.7609) held under the Uruguayan presidency, we adopted resolution 2261 (2016), which created a monitoring mission in Colombia designed to begin its work during the 12 months following the signing of a final peace agreement between the Colombian Government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). Six months after that, in Havana on 24 August, the Colombian parties signed the historic Final Agreement, bringing 50 years of internal conflict to a definitive end. Today, under the presidency of New Zealand, and at another ministerial-level meeting — and I would like to thank New Zealand's Minister for Foreign Affairs for his presence here — the Council has just adopted resolution 2307 (2016), approving, among other things, the Secretary-General's recommendations regarding the size, operational aspects and mandate of the mission.

Senegal, as a firm supporter of the peaceful settlement of disputes, welcomes the determined commitment of the Colombian parties and the trust they

have placed in the Security Council, thereby helping to restore the Council to the heart of its original mission. That is why the Senegalese delegation sponsored and voted in favour of resolution 2307 (2016), in a sign of its faith in the peace process in Colombia. I take this opportunity to thank the delegation of the United Kingdom for its leadership in conducting the formal negotiations, as well as the guarantor States, Cuba and Norway, and Chile and Venezuela, the supporting States.

As the international component and coordinator of the tripartite monitoring and verification mechanism, the United Nations mission in Colombia will have the important job of monitoring the separation of the forces and the laying down of arms, including through its regional offices, set up for managing the transitional local points for normalization. The recent tripartite visit of the United Nations, the Colombian Government and FARC to the areas where the operations will take place augur well. To the representative of Colombia here in the Council today, I would like to repeat what I said at our meeting in January, in a quotation from a popular Colombian television series, which is that "a people that does not know its history is condemned to see that history repeat itself indefinitely". Today I can say that Colombia has learned the tragic lesson of the past 50 years and has taken a historic step, one full of hope.

Mr. Gimolieca (Angola): Angola voted in favour of resolution 2307 (2016), which approves the Secretary-General's recommendations on the size, operational aspects and mandate of a United Nations mission in Colombia. We warmly welcome the signing, on 24 August, of the Final Agreement between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejercito del Pueblo (FARC-EP), putting an end to more than 50 years of conflict.

We also welcome the recent report (S/2016/729) of the Secretary-General and its recommendation for deploying 450 unarmed observers and a civilian component. We commend the efforts of the mediators in the peace negotiations in Havana — Cuba, Norway, Venezuela and Chile — for their manifold contributions to peace and security in the region. We urge the two sides to strive to implement the peace agreement and wish the monitoring and verification mechanism every success in its work with the Government and FARC-EP in implementing the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities.

Lastly, we call on the international community to support the implementation of the peace agreement by providing the financial and logistical assistance that the Government of Colombia needs to ensure the success of the peace process.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is an honour for me to participate in today's historic meeting, which crowns the work that has been done to achieve peace in Colombia with the Council's adoption of resolution 2307 (2016), which moves the peace process into a new stage, on the basis of a solid foundation and the support of the United Nations. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Colombian Government on reaching a peace agreement with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), enabling Colombia to begin a new chapter in its history and put an end to a conflict that has lasted more than 50 years and created thousands of victims.

Today's resolution was adopted unanimously, proof of the Council's desire to ensure that the Government of Colombia has the support it needs in order to restore peace in the country. In that regard, I would like to point out that Egypt sponsored and voted in favour of the resolution, because we have always supported the Colombian Government in its efforts to achieve peace.

I therefore thank all those who contributed to and played an effective role in achieving this historic Agreement. I hope that the people of Columbia will be satisfied with it, so that it can be truly implemented and the United Nations political mission can commence its work.

I would also like to thank the United Kingdom delegation for its contribution in drafting the resolution and achieving the necessary consensus.

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia): Malaysia is pleased to have co-sponsored and voted in favour of resolution 2307 (2106), which was adopted unanimously today, and endorses the recommendations of the Secretary-General concerning the size, operational aspects and mandate of the United Nations mission in Columbia, as contained his report (S/2016/729).

We take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Columbia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejercito del Pueblo (FARC-EP) on reaching a final peace accord, which

will close a chapter on half a century of armed conflict. The success of the peace process is the culmination of the political will, courage and leadership of both sides in finding solutions aimed at a peaceful and prosperous Colombia, bolstered by the unwavering support of the international community. Those shared aims must continue to guide the work of all parties in the implementation of the peace accords, including the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants.

We wish to commend in particular the Government of Colombia and FARC-EP for their commitment to the protections and rights of children during the peace process, exemplified by the Agreement signed on 15 May between the two sides to separate and reintegrate children associated with FARC-EP. We are heartened by the release of the first group of children associated with FARC-EP on 10 September to the relevant child-protection actors and look forward to further progress in implementing the Agreement. In that regard, we stress the importance of coordination between all relevant United Nations presences and mechanisms in Colombia in ensuring that children affected by the armed conflict receive the attention, protection and assistance that they need.

We reiterate our firm support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Jean Arnault, and the United Nations mission in Colombia, as they carry out their mandate within the monitoring and verification mechanism. The good will and cooperation of member States of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in contributing observers to the mission is fully recognized and deeply appreciated. We also pay tribute to the guarantors, Cuba and Norway, as well as the accompanying countries of the peace process, Chile and Venezuela, for the positive role, which they have played in the peace process.

In closing, we are hopeful that lasting peace and stability are within reach. We must working towards ensuring that the hopes and dreams of a Colombia free from conflict become a reality. We wish the people of Colombia well in this journey towards shared prosperity for all Colombians.

Mr. Okamura (Japan): Japan is very pleased to have co-sponsored resolution 2307 (2016), unanimously adopted today. It is an enormous step forward for Colombia's reconciliation and development after half a century of conflict and four years of peace talks. Japan would like once again to welcome the final peace Agreement between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejercito del Pueblo (FARC-EP) on 24 August. We congratulate the parties on this historic achievement for the good of the people of Colombia. Japan particularly commends Cuba, Norway, Chile and Venezuela for their contribution to the process.

We now turn to the essential work of implementation. As was emphasized in resolution 2261 (2016), the people of Colombia must be true owners of the Agreement. All parties should work together to the process forward, but we, the international community, also have a vital role to play through the United Nations mission in Colombia. Having co-sponsored resolution 2261 (2016) and 2307 (2016), Japan fully supports the mission. We look forward to the mission's success over the course of the coming year.

Japan also underlines its continued commitment to the political process and to the equitable and sustainable socioeconomic development of Colombia, including through the rehabilitation of victims and post-conflict assistance, such as demining. After more than five decades of conflict, Colombia is approaching a critical phase in achieving national unity and overcoming its remaining challenges, including the laying down of arms and reintegration.

In Japan, we say that on a trip, just as it is reassuring to have a companion, it is similarly important to support each other on the journey through life. Japan pledged to be such a companion to the people of Colombia as they advance on their journey towards true reconciliation.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for all your efforts and for presiding over this meeting, which has a very special meaning for Spain.

In January, Colombia asked the Security Council to support the peace process, which had not yet been concluded, while the ceasefire had not yet been achieved. Contrary to the natural tendency of the Council, a special mission was authorized. That was certainly an unusual occurrence, explained by the fact that the Council was fully convinced on that occasion that the people of Colombia were going to successfully achieve peace. It was a wager for Colombia and Colombians.

The universally known author Miguel de Cervantes wrote, "The goal that we seek tires us all the more when

we are closer to the hope of obtaining it". Colombians have not given into that fatigue, and on 26 August made history with the signing of the final peace Agreement. Through its effort, determination and courage, Colombia seems committed to rejecting once and for all the argument of Álvaro Mutis, who wrote that the human species is hopeless.

Today we have adopted a second resolution — resolution 2307 (2016) — with 15 votes in favour and 15 sponsors on the mission in Colombia, which has just clarified several aspects of its mandate but maintains the focus on defined tasks within specified time frames as requested by the parties. Spain is very proud to participate in the United Nations mission in Colombia by providing 22 observers, 25 per cent of whom are women, which particularly pleased us, especially since that is in line with the request made by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

To conclude, within the specific context of the laying down of arms and the ceasefire, towards which the mission is working, there are other aspects — such as demining, reintegration, reparations and restitution for victims — that are particularly important in order to establish a lasting peace. With regard to support in those areas, which the international community is providing, Colombia can always count on Spain.

Mr. Yelchenko (Ukraine): The Ukrainian delegation decided to co-sponsor resolution 2307 (2016), adopted today, for the following reasons.

Ukraine welcomes the Final Agreement for the Termination of Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace reached between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo, which has been achieved after almost four years of formal negotiations. President Juan Manuel Santos Calderón said that the peace agreement represented the beginning of the end of the suffering, pain and tragedy of war and that it brought an end to more than 50 years of armed conflict in Colombia.

In the spirit of strong support for a stable and long-lasting peace in the Republic of Colombia, Ukraine welcomes today's resolution, which endorsed the report (S/2016/729) of the Secretary-General and his recommendations on the mandate of the United Nations mission in Colombia. We also express our appreciation to the British delegation for its leadership and efficient work in preparing the draft and conducting negotiations.

The Security Council should continue to play a proactive role in supporting the parties as they advance in implementing the provisions of the Final Agreement, as well as ensuring the effective functioning of the tripartite monitoring and verification mechanism.

We believe that the Colombian experience of engaging the United Nations as the international component of the tripartite mechanism will be a success story that will bring stability to the region and become an example for other parts of the world affected by lasting conflict.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation supported resolution 2307 (2016) and hopes that it will lead to a final settlement in Colombia.

The agreement reached in Havana between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejercito del Pueblo (FARC-EP) is key to the pacific settlement of more than half a century of inter-Colombian conflict. The agreement opens a new chapter for the country in terms of national reconciliation and development.

We congratulate the parties to the dialogue and the Colombian people on this victory. We note the political resolve involved in finding a compromise solution that was displayed by the participants in the negotiation process and the significant mediation efforts deployed by the guarantors, Cuba and Norway, assisted by Venezuela and Chile. A considerable contribution has been made to the promotion of peace in Latin America, to the bolstering of regional stability and to reaffirming the effectiveness of legal political means in solving long-standing, even very difficult, problems.

We hope for a swift conclusion to the preparation period for the practical implementation of the provisions of the Final Agreement. We are prepared to continue to assist Colombia, both bilaterally and multilaterally, by providing international assistance to the settlement process and to ensuring that the necessary post-conflict changes take place.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to thank you, Minister McCully, for your presence here today and for the unanimous decision just taken by the Security Council in adopting resolution 2307 (2016). This is yet another reflection of the commitment

of Council members and of the Members of the United Nations to peace in Colombia. On behalf of my Government, I should like to thank you for your invaluable help as well as Ambassador Matthew Rycroft, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, and his team of diplomats for having drafted the resolution and for the difficult task of coordinating it.

On 24 August, the lead negotiators of the Government and of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejercito del Pueblo (FARC-EP) agreed in Havana something that many Colombians may have believed unattainable: final texts for ending the conflict and building a long-lasting and stable peace in my country. They will be endorsed through the signing of the Final Agreement on 26 September, in Cartagena de Indias — just three days — and thus put an end once and for all to more than five decades of armed conflict in our country. We are deeply grateful to and appreciative of the Governments of Cuba, Norway, Chile and Venezuela, as guarantors and supporters of the negotiating process, for their dedication and their commitment to this difficult undertaking. We are grateful also to the States members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States for contributing unarmed observers to the United Nations mission in Colombia, and to all the other countries that will be supporting us through their participation, as, Spain, for example, just announced it would do.

This negotiating process has been arduous, complex and fraught. Begun four years ago, it leaves important lessons for peace for the world and great challenges with respect to its implementation, as some here have pointed out. It has been an inclusive process that has placed at the centre of peace the protection of human rights, specifically the rights of victims, women, peoples of African descent and indigenous people, organizations of farmers and of displaced persons, and ensured that all minors are removed from the ranks of FARC-EP and returned to civilian life.

The agreement has begun to bear fruit. Since the entry into force of the ceasefire, there has not been a single victim or clash because of the conflict. Likewise, on 10 September, representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross received the first 13 minors handed over as part of the commitment to return all of the children and adolescents who remain among the ranks of the organization. They and future Colombian generations, as President Santos has said, will now have the opportunity to learn about the suffering of the war only from history books.

With the signing of the Final Agreement on 26 September and the approval of the referendum to be held by the Government on 2 October, Colombians will have the opportunity to open the door to a better future, with a stable and lasting peace that we will have built with the support of the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole.

Foreign Minister María Ángela Holguín Cuéllar, speaking here at the United Nations on 25 January, said that the international community, with the culmination of the peace process, will see a Colombia that is taking off, one that has enormous potential, human capacity and national resources. That will enable it not only to forge a more prosperous and just society but also to better contribute to the development of our Americas and the world. That was the dream of the thousands of Colombians whose lives were sacrificed to the violence and who cannot be here today to witness this historic event.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.